

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
18 May 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Israeli-Arab Situation
(As of 1800 EDT)

1. The troop movements on both sides of the Israeli-Egyptian border coupled with Egypt's request for the withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) stationed there have created an ominous situation along that frontier. Israel's threat, meanwhile, to take reprisal action against Syria, in response to further serious terrorism still stands.

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5. Cairo has now formally requested UNEF to leave the country, according to press reports, and U Thant, who earlier said he could not respond until such a formal request was received, must now reply. He probably will delay a withdrawal as long as possible, but he apparently believes UNEF will have to leave. The Secretary General is likely to ask Nasir to reconsider first, however.

6. The Israelis have sounded the alarm about UNEF evacuation of their position at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba, a shipping route they regard as vital. Israel clearly would take very seriously an Egyptian reoccupation of that position which, before the 1956 Sinai campaign, had prevented Israeli shipping from reaching Eilat.

7. For their part the Israelis had instituted a build-up of their forces in southern Israel in response to the Egyptian moves. They maintain, however, that these are only precautionary and that they have no intention of initiating any action.

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